

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. - 12. (canceled).

13. (currently amended): Device_a for preventing laces coming undone_a in the form of a band (1) in ~~an~~the open position, and arranged to be placed on a shoe and to cover a lace (3) of said shoe (4)_a and comprising:

- a left-hand end (12, 13) and a right-hand end (13, 12), each comprising mutual fixing means (6, 7),

- means (2) ~~for~~ fixing the said band (1) to the said shoe (4), and

- a central part comprising a series of orifices (2) for the lace (3) to pass through,

~~the~~ said device being designed to be folded down in ~~a~~the closed position by fixing the left-hand end (12, 13) to the right-hand end (13, 12) by ~~the~~ said mutual fixing means (6, 7), the length of ~~the~~ said device (1) for preventing laces coming undone being substantially perpendicular to ~~an~~the axial direction of ~~said~~the shoe (4) when said device is placed on said shoe, characterised in that ~~the~~ said device (1) for preventing laces coming undone is designed, when it is in the closed position, to only partially cover ~~the~~ loops (5) of a knot (8) of ~~said~~a lace (3); when the latter is knotted.

14. (currently amended): Device (1) for preventing laces coming undone according to claim 13, characterised in that the mutual fixing means (6, 7) ~~for~~ fixing the said left-hand side (12, 13) of the device for covering laces to the right-hand side (13, 12) are mutual self-gripping means (6, 7).

15. (previously presented): Device (1) for preventing laces coming undone according to claim 13, characterised in that the series of orifices (2) for the lace (3) to pass comprises several orifices (2) for the lace (3) to pass.

16. (previously presented): Device (1) for preventing laces coming undone according to claim 13, characterised in that at least one of the orifices (2) for the lace (3) to pass in the said series is in the form of a slit.

17. (previously presented): Device (1) for preventing laces coming undone according to claim 13, characterised in that it comprises a series of lace passage orifices (2) comprising two orifices (2) in the form of a slit and two substantially circular orifices (2), the said slits (2) being situated one above the other parallel to a long side of the said device (1) for preventing laces coming undone, the two substantially circular orifices (2) being situated in particular on each side of the two slits (2) with respect to the said long side of the said device (1).

18. (currently amended): Device (1) for preventing laces coming undone according to claim 13, characterised in that the device (1) ~~comprises~~can comprise a repetition of the patterns of the orifices (2), the said patterns being situated one above the other parallel to a long side of the said device (1).

19. (currently amended): Device (1) for preventing laces coming undone according to ~~one~~ claim 13, characterised in that ~~it has a~~the length which is between 5 cm and 10 cm and is more particularly approximately 6.5 cm, and ~~a~~the width which is between 1 cm and 5 cm and is preferably approximately 2 cm and approximately 4.5 cm ~~according to the model~~.

20. (previously presented): Device (1) for preventing laces coming undone according to claim 13, characterised in that the said band (1) is formed by a piece made from leather, textile, flexible plastics material, articulated metal or any material that is deformable in order to bring the band (1) into its closed position.

21. (previously presented): Device (1) for preventing laces coming undone according to claim 13, characterised in that the said means of fixing the said device to the shoe consist partly of the said lace (3).

22. (currently amended): Assembly comprising

- a device (1) for preventing the laces coming undone according to claim 13,
- a shoe (4) with a lace (3) comprising a rectangular-shaped tongue (9) and a lace (3),

characterised in that the device (1) for preventing laces coming undone is an integral part of the tongue (9) of the shoe (4).

Claims 23-24 (canceled).

25. (new): In combination:
a shoe; and

a device for preventing laces coming undone in the form of a band (1) in an open position, and arranged to be placed on a shoe and to cover a lace (3) of said shoe (4), and comprising:

- a left-hand end (12, 13) and a right-hand end (13, 12), each comprising mutual fixing means (6, 7),

- means (2) for fixing said band (1) to said shoe (4), and

- a central part comprising a series of orifices (2) for the lace (3) to pass through,

said device being designed to be folded down in a closed position by fixing the left-hand end (12, 13) to the right-hand end (13, 12) by said mutual fixing means (6, 7), the length of said device (1) for preventing laces coming undone being substantially perpendicular to an axial direction of said shoe (4) when said device is placed on said shoe, characterised in that said device (1) for preventing laces coming undone is designed, when it is in the closed position, to only partially cover loops (5) of a knot (8) of said lace (3) when the latter is knotted.